

INFLUENZA IN LOUISVILLE

The Influenza Pandemic of 1918-1919 took its toll around the world. It affected Louisville, CO specifically through the work environments and work conditions of miners. The flu virus, it is believed, had more opportunities to spread among coal miners working in close quarters, leading to concern about the impact on coal output.

The Denver Rocky Mountain News reported on October 17, 1918 about the situation at the Marshall Mine, where some Louisville men worked, not far from Louisville. The news article stated, "Twenty-five shovel-men in the Marshall mine went home today, stricken with influenza. The total working force at the mine is seventy-five men. Other mines in the district also are affected and fear is expressed that the coal output of the mines will be seriously affected."

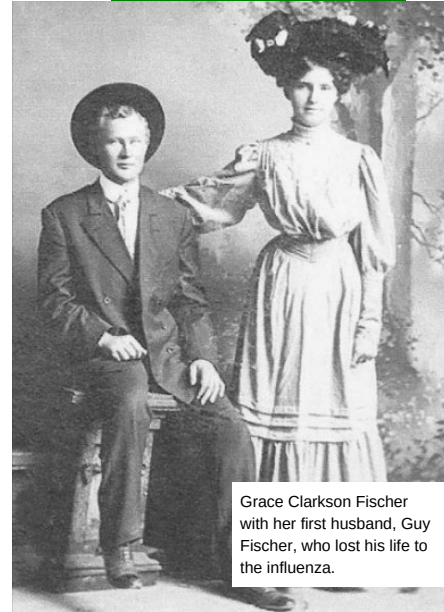
People relied on the help of doctors, but doctors were scarce and were not immune themselves. Dr. Horace Burns was a doctor in Louisville (the Burnses lived on Main Street) for many years starting in the 1890s. He moved to Denver, continued working as a doctor, and died of the flu in October 1918. He contracted the virus from his patients, according to Denver newspapers coverage at the time.

LOCAL REACTIONS

- Authorities appealed to "every woman who knows how to give medicine to report for duty."
- Citizens voiced their concerns, sorrows, and fears about the virus
- Newspapers reported on the spread and the fear about the reduction of coal availability

FURTHER READING

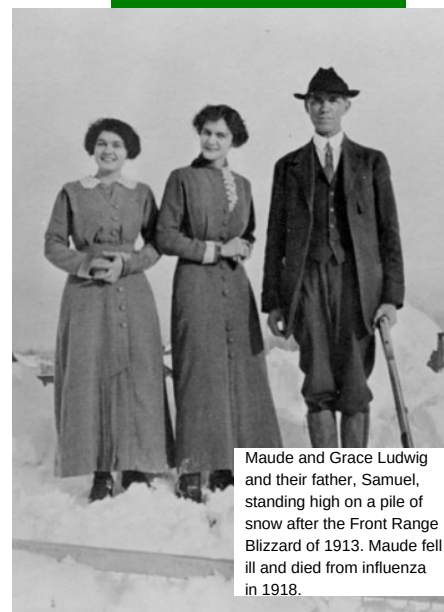
"How the 1918-1919 Influenza Pandemic Changed Louisville Families Forever," *Louisville Historian* (2018).



Grace Clarkson Fischer with her first husband, Guy Fischer, who lost his life to the influenza.



Laura Epley (right) in about 1915 with her grandmother. Laura passed away from the influenza in 1918.



Maude and Grace Ludwig and their father, Samuel, standing high on a pile of snow after the Front Range Blizzard of 1913. Maude fell ill and died from influenza in 1918.